



# russian analytical digest

[www.css.ethz.ch/rad](http://www.css.ethz.ch/rad)[www.laender-analysen.de](http://www.laender-analysen.de)

## THE POLITICS OF THE PUTIN REGIME

### ■ ANALYSIS

Potemkin Conservatism: an Ideological Tool of the Kremlin 2  
By Witold Rodkiewicz & Jadwiga Rogoża, Warsaw

### ■ ANALYSIS

A Devout Ally or an *Enfant Terrible*? Explaining the Sources and Forms of Ramzan Kadyrov's Influence. 5  
By Emil Souleimanov, Prague

### ■ OPINION POLL

Russian Attitudes towards Patriotism 8  
"Can Ramzan Kadyrov Be Trusted?" 9

## Potemkin Conservatism: an Ideological Tool of the Kremlin

By Witold Rodkiewicz & Jadwiga Rogoża, Warsaw

### Abstract

This article considers the Putin regime's turn to a conservative ideology. It interprets this move as a political strategy to stabilise the regime and prevent any political mobilisation around a liberal agenda in Russia. It concludes, however, that the gap between these conservative slogans and the regime's actual conduct will undermine its credibility in the eyes of Russian society in the long-term.

### Introduction

At the outset of his third presidential term, Vladimir Putin openly declared that henceforth he would be guided in his policies by 'conservative values'. However, in reality the Kremlin has been treating its own conservative ideology in a purely instrumental manner. Its resort to conservatism has been aimed solely at enhancing the legitimacy of the regime by claiming that it reflects Russian tradition. While it is the Kremlin's genuine intention to maintain a strong, centralised state authority, the conservative social and moral rhetoric is in fact being used as just another 'political technology', i.e. a tool for manipulating public opinion, both at home and abroad. The invocation of this ideology means neither that the current rulers of Russia really adhere to conservative values, nor that they have a long-term programme to implement them. We are in fact dealing with another kind of 'Potemkin village', the aim of which is to divert public attention from Russia's real socio-political and economic problems, and to provide the authorities with arguments to implement repressive internal policies and an anti-Western foreign policy.

### The Roots and Genesis of the Kremlin's 'Conservative Project'

Conservative themes are not entirely new in the Kremlin's ideological armoury. They first appeared when Vladimir Putin came to power at the turn of 2000; recurring again after 2003. At that time, however, they did not dominate the Kremlin's ideological message, but rather coexisted alongside other ideological currents. It was only during Vladimir Putin's last presidential campaign in 2011–2012 that conservative themes were given a central place in his rhetoric, later coming to dominate the Kremlin's official narrative and become the main ideological foundation of the regime.

The Kremlin's resort to conservative ideology was a reaction to the emergence of an urban middle class that has articulated demands for systemic reforms: economic liberalisation, political pluralism, reduction of state interference in social life, more leeway for grassroots civic initiatives. The activation of this group resulted in

a plethora of grassroots initiatives that aimed at creating mechanisms for holding the government accountable to the public, with their discontent with Putin's return to the Kremlin expressed in massive street protests in 2011–2012.

Another reason why Putin raised the banner of conservatism was his belief that the susceptibility of part of the population to liberal ideas stems from an ideological void, which arose in the aftermath of the collapse of communism. Therefore, the authorities believed it necessary to present society with an attractive ideological alternative that could fill this void, and thus prevent the spread of liberal attitudes and beliefs. This offer was aimed primarily at Putin's traditional social base—the poorer inhabitants of the provinces, employed in the public sector, industry and agriculture.

### The Characteristics of the Kremlin's 'Conservatism'

When deciding to make use of conservatism for shoring up his regime, Putin invoked its radical version that had previously existed on the margins of Russian political and intellectual life. It was extremely anti-Western and anti-liberal, and called for the revival of the empire. As a result, the nationalist-conservative discourse has moved from the periphery to the centre of the Russian public debate.

A characteristic feature of the Kremlin's 'conservatism' is its predominantly negative agenda. It defines clearly those phenomena and values that should be combated, while its positive programme remains vague and inchoate. Its most distinctive feature is its rejection of the political, social and cultural models of the modern West. It preaches that Russia and the West represent fundamentally discrepant civilisations. These discrepancies are a consequence of the West's abandonment of the values of Christian civilization, its rejection of traditional identities and its acceptance of moral relativism. Such characterization of the West allows the Kremlin to position Russia as a defender and mainstay of European civilisation.

On the positive side, the Kremlin's version of conservatism advocates maintaining political and social sta-

bility, the revival of national identity, the cultivation of patriotism, as well as a return to the traditional model of the family, state paternalism and social corporatism. In particular, it emphasizes the need to maintain a strong, hierarchical and centralised state power in Russia. The epitome of this should be a charismatic leader, whose authority has a special, quasi-sacred character, despite the formal maintenance of democratic (electoral) mechanisms of its legitimacy.

This ideology presents society as being rooted in Russian tradition and naturally wedded to conservative values. It calls for the cultivation of the traditional model of a large family with many children, as well as the reinstatement of the Orthodox Church (and other traditional religions) as a source of moral principles. The Kremlin's 'conservatism' contrasts ordinary Russian people with the elites. The Kremlin thus appeals to genuine social sentiments which combine anti-elitism, anti-Americanism and xenophobia. At the same time, Putin's vision of the state model envisages the role of society as limited to passive participation in the processes initiated by the authorities.

### **The 'Conservative Project' in Domestic Politics**

The Kremlin's reaction to the political and social challenges was not limited to the ideological sphere, but also included a number of legislative and administrative steps. The Kremlin has taken comprehensive counter-reforming measures, leading to the further centralisation of power, restrictions on political activity and civil rights, intensified harassment of the opposition and greater power of the repressive apparatus. Under the banner of a 'conservative project', it extended the scope of repression beyond the political sphere, and used it against people who were not direct political opponents of the regime. It has penalised behaviours that go beyond the traditional (as the Kremlin defines it) canon of lifestyle and worldview. The broadly defined opposition has also been subjected to a propaganda campaign equating any criticism of the government with opposition to Russia as such, or even with treason. It has also strove to discredit the opposition by arguing that liberal democratic ideology leads naturally and inevitably to the spread of non-traditional lifestyles and moral decay. Finally, one of the government's most effective tactics has been to brand any disagreement with the annexation of Crimea as being anti-Russian and unpatriotic (Putin has described opponents of the annexation as "national traitors")—which puts any pro-Western agenda beyond the pale of official political competition.

An important element of the 'conservative project' is the introduction of disciplining measures against the

Russian elite, under the slogan of 'nationalisation of the elites'. The Kremlin has initiated a series of laws which have tightened supervision over the foreign assets and business activities of Russian officials and employees of state corporations, increasing the elite's dependence on the Kremlin. Official propaganda pictures the elites' contacts and business ties with the West as an instrument of their subordination to foreign political centres.

One of the goals of the new 'project' is to demonstrate that Putin's policies enjoy the support of the majority of the general public, and that the people are opposed to the ideas of liberal reforms. To this end, it juxtaposes the 'corrupt' elites and 'demoralised' middle class with the 'ordinary people', the latter being allegedly faithful to traditional values, and therefore immune to anti-Putin slogans.

### **'Conservatism' as an Instrument of Foreign Policy**

Putin's 'conservatism' was devised not only with a Russian audience in mind, but also to be used as a tool of foreign policy. In Kremlin's view, ideology has become an important element of international rivalry, which is acquiring a civilisational dimension, involving a choice between different socio-political models. Therefore, the Kremlin saw the need to come up with an ideological formula that would legitimise Russia's aspirations to the role of an influential great power. Conservative ideology, attractive to those political forces that are opposed to Western post-modern liberalism and are hostile to the United States and the European Union, clearly fitted the bill. Invoking this ideology, Russian diplomacy and propaganda has been consistently promoting a narrative wherein Russia is presented as the main defender of a stable international order, traditional state sovereignty, and civilisational and political pluralism throughout the world.

Another part of the Kremlin's 'conservative project' is the concept of the so-called Russian World (Russkii mir). The concept envisages the existence of a separate, multiethnic and multireligious Russian civilisation shared by a community of people, who identify themselves not merely with Russian language and culture, but also with the traditions of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. The primary aim of cultivating this concept appears to be the weakening of the national identities of citizens of post-Soviet states and fostering their ties with, and loyalty to, the Russian state. The Kremlin has also invoked this idea in its propaganda to legitimise the annexation of Crimea in March 2014 and the 'hybrid war' against Ukraine, pointing to the religious, historical and ethnic ties which these territories have with Russia.

## The 'Conservative Project': an Effective Tool Or a Self-Delusional Mirage?

The Kremlin's adoption of a new 'conservative' ideology, and its implementation of this conservative political project, seems in the short term to have brought the Kremlin its desired results. In contrast, however, the long-term consequences may be unfavourable for the authorities.

For the time being the implementation of the 'conservative project' has inhibited the erosion of legitimacy of the regime. It has consolidated most of the elite around President Putin, suppressing the burgeoning symptoms of dissatisfaction with the direction in which the regime has been developing. The project has also expanded the Kremlin's mechanisms for monitoring the elites and delegitimised any action which the opposition takes against it. It also helped to increase public support for Putin and justify the repressive measures taken against members of the elite and the middle class.

An equally effective means of mobilising public support for the Kremlin has been the aggressive, anti-Western foreign policy. The annexation of Crimea proved particularly efficacious, raising President Putin's approval ratings and consolidating both the Russian public and the elites around the Kremlin. The invocation of conservative ideology has also helped to broaden Russia's support in Europe among the radical, populist and Eurosceptic right. It also reinforced the Kremlin's attempts to establish a tactical alliance with conservative Christian circles. The 'conservatism' proclaimed by the Kremlin has also been an effective tool against the 'soft power' of the European Union in post-Soviet societies.

On the other hand, among the mainstream of Western public opinion, the donning of the conservative mask by the Kremlin has contributed significantly to a loss of sympathy towards Russia, and in particular to its current authorities.

In the long run, this conservative ideology will not solve the problem of the fragile legitimacy of the Krem-

lin's authority in the eyes of that part of the Russian elite, which had been expecting a gradual liberalisation of the system. The Kremlin's sharp anti-Western policy shift and the annexation of Crimea are definitely not in its interest. Its concerns have been further heightened by the Kremlin's efforts to redistribute the largest assets. Therefore, in the long run, forcing through the 'conservative project' carries the risk of destabilising the regime, by antagonising many groups within the elite and the affluent social strata, worsening their economic condition, and undermining their sense of security.

In addition, the Kremlin can hardly count on active mass support for its ideological project. The deeply rooted passivity of Russian society means that even those initiatives that are supported by society rarely motivate grassroots activity in accordance with the instructions of the Kremlin. Many of the conservative demands put forward by the Kremlin diverge from the real needs and aspirations of broader social groups.

The impact of the Kremlin's conservative ideology may also be weakened by the fact that the ruling clan itself sees this ideology in purely instrumental terms. Many of the 'conservative' declarations are in fact feigned and used for propaganda purposes; the Kremlin's actions do not affect the oligarchic nature of Putin's system, nor do they translate into an increase in the influence of 'the people' on the mechanisms governing the state. The extreme materialism and ostentatious consumerism of the ruling elite stand in stark contrast to the conservation values proclaimed by the regime, something which has not escaped public attention. Due to its instrumental nature, the Kremlin's ideology cannot build a lasting and genuine relationship between the government and society, which would protect the government against a loss of support caused by the deterioration of economic conditions in Russia.

### *About the Authors*

Witold Rodkiewicz is a Senior Fellow at the Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW).

Jadwiga Rogoża is a Senior Fellow at the Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW).

### *Further Reading*

An extended version of this analysis is available in *OSW Policy Brief 48*, available from: <http://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/point-view/2015-02-03/potemkin-conservatism-ideological-tool-kremlin>

## ANALYSIS

## A Devout Ally or an *Enfant Terrible*? Explaining the Sources and Forms of Ramzan Kadyrov's Influence.

By Emil Souleimanov, Prague

### Abstract

Boris Nemtsov's assassination in February and the shooting incident in Grozny in April raised questions about the "controllability" of the Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov, whose influence has long stretched beyond the boundaries of the North Caucasian republic. This article explores the forms and sources of Kadyrov's increasingly self-confident policies, both within Chechnya and on the federal level. It points to Kadyrov's special relationship with Vladimir Putin and his economic and security dependence on Moscow as key factors shaping Kadyrov's loyalty to the Russian state. The article concludes that given this dependence, Kadyrov and his *de facto* paramilitary units—*kadyrovtsy*—are likely to be used by Moscow as a vigilant force both within Russia against prospectively vocal domestic opposition, and outside Russia in its hybrid wars with neighbors. Therefore, despite growing tension between the Chechen leader and his neighboring North Caucasian republics, on the one hand, and the Chechen leader and part of the federal *siloviki* on the other hand, as well as his increasingly controversial moves on the federal scene, Putin will continue with his strategic wager on Kadyrov.

In late April, a hitherto unprecedented conflict emerged between Chechnya's head, Ramzan Kadyrov, and the authorities of the neighboring Stavropol province that soon acquired federal proportions. Following an incident in Grozny, in which a Chechen suspect was killed by Stavropol policemen, Kadyrov made bold statements emphasizing his exclusive authority over Chechnya's territory. The conflict again drew attention to the Chechen strongman's increasingly influential and uncontrollable standing in Russia, to the nature of his special relationship with Vladimir Putin, and his possible ousting by the Russian president.

The incident took place in downtown Grozny on April 19. A group of Stavropol policemen chased an ethnic Chechen suspect, Djambulat Dadayev, who was killed after his alleged refusal to submit to the Stavropol *siloviki*. According to local sources, Dadayev was suspected of attempting to murder a Stavropol-based Dagestani businessman, Magomed Tazirov, who had been hospitalized earlier with severe firearm injuries. Following the shooting, OMON [Special Purpose Mobile Unit]—the elite Chechen forces formally subordinated to the republic's Ministry of Interior, but *de facto* under Kadyrov's personal command—encircled the Stavropol policemen. It was only the fact that Russian troops arrived to the site from the nearby Khankala military base that prevented the tension from escalating into violence.

The incident evoked fierce reactions from Ramzan Kadyrov. Firstly, the Chechen authorities were quick to claim that Dadayev was killed despite his surrender to the Stavropol policemen, something that the latter and eyewitnesses have questioned, who point to Dadayev's attempt to drive away by directing his car at the Stavropol police cars. Secondly, a day after the incident, and in front of the promptly summoned chiefs of Chechen

law enforcement, Kadyrov asserted that "the times, like in the [early] 2000[s], are gone. Someone wanted to fabricate a result—they took a [random] Chechen and killed him [...] This is not going to happen again [...] I'm officially telling you: if without my knowledge [someone] appears on your territory, no matter from Moscow or Stavropol, just shoot on sight. They've got to take us seriously". In so doing, Kadyrov clearly hinted at the practice of infamous indiscriminate *zachistki*, carried out by the Russian military in the early 2000s, which swept Chechnya, leaving hundreds of Chechen males of conscript age either "disappeared" or extrajudicially executed. Thirdly, in an attempt to challenge the lawfulness of the Stavropol policemen's endeavor, Kadyrov repeatedly emphasized that Dadayev, an ordinary and unconvicted Chechen was killed "on rich people's orders". "How is that possible", Kadyrov's argument went on, "that a group from the Stavropol region, SOBR [Special Rapid Response Unit], OMON, all the structures of Khankala are deployed for money? This simply doesn't make sense". Fourthly, Chechnya's investigative committee office speedily filed a formal charge to the Stavropol police. According to Grozny, the latter severely misused its authority, having opened fire with automatic weapons in the "densely populated area" and without informing local authorities.

Soon thereafter, the federal authorities weighed in, when the head of the Investigative Committee of Russia, General Alexander Bastrykin, personally and without any explanation annulled the charges filled by its Chechen branch. In addition, with the Kremlin remaining silent on the incident, the federal Ministry of Interior denounced Kadyrov's statements. In the meanwhile, Kadyrov somewhat backed off, trying to downplay the conflict, and repeatedly referred



to himself as “Putin’s devoted soldier”, ready to resign at anytime.

This incident is not unique, as Ramzan Kadyrov has been frequently involved in similar conflicts with the elites of Chechnya’s neighboring republics, typically with the Ingush and Dagestani authorities. Kadyrov’s personal animosity towards Yunus-bek Yevkurov, the leader of Ingushetia, often revolving around the Ingush authorities’ allegedly relaxed stance on local insurgents and their support networks is particularly well-known and long-standing. Many observers have admitted that the driving force behind Kadyrov’s animosity towards Yevkurov, a decorated officer of the Russian Army, has been the Chechen leader’s grudge towards and envy of his Ingush counterpart. In the past, Kadyrov has personally insulted Yevkurov, which has infuriated many in both Ingushetia and Russian military circles.

Likewise, since around the mid-2000s, Kadyrov has been involved in a series of incidents with the Dagestani authorities over their alleged violations of Dagestan’s Chechen minority’s human rights, particularly in the Novolaksky (formerly Aukhovskiy) district on Chechnya’s borders. Quite intriguingly, as early as the mid-2000s, the *kadyrovtsy* episodically carried out what they claimed to be counterinsurgent incursions into Dagestani territory, which many in Dagestan considered a sign of Grozny’s barely concealed territorial aspirations. Back then, the Dagestani authorities were not consulted in advance of the ongoing incursions of the *kadyrovtsy*. The neighboring republic’s complaints were trivialized by Kadyrov, who claimed that Chechen counterinsurgents were in fact doing the Dagestani *siloviki*’s job of fighting the terrorists for them. Economic interests and power aspirations also seem to have played a role, as evidenced by Kadyrov’s ongoing conflict with the mayor of the Dagestani city of Khasavyurt, Saigidpasha Umakhanov, over economic control over Dagestan’s key Western city. Kadyrov’s long-standing attempts to turn the North Caucasus into his own power base have become notorious. Over time, Kadyrov’s expansionism, his disrespect of neighboring republics’ authority, and his occasional undiplomatic remarks directed against neighboring republics’ elites, coupled with the *kadyrovtsy*’s infamous impudence, have all generated significant antagonism between the Chechen authorities, particularly its *siloviki*, on the one hand, and the authorities and law enforcement agencies of Dagestan, Ingushetia, and increasingly also the federal *siloviki*, on the other hand.

In all these cases, the Kremlin has tacitly sided with Kadyrov, which explains the Chechen leader’s unscrupulous manners with regard to his neighbors. Moreover, the Russian authorities have ignored—and in some cases most likely assisted—in a series of politically motivated assassinations carried out, as most observers have come to coalesce, on Kadyrov’s orders. Notable examples

include the liquidation of Kadyrov’s personal enemies. For instance, the mighty Yamadayev brothers in downtown Moscow and Dubai. According to some, Sulim Yamadayev’s murder in Dubai in 2009 by Kadyrov’s cousin, Adam Delimkhanov, and a six-man group of his aides, would have been impossible without the assistance of the Russian secret services, based in the Russian embassy in the United Arab Emirates. Commentators have suggested that Yamadayev’s assassination bears a striking resemblance to the killing of Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, Ichkeria’s ex-president, in Doha in 2004, an act that was certainly executed by Russia’s secret services. Local sources also remind us that a number of killers—including Lechi Bogatyrov, wanted by Interpol for the murder of Lechi Israpilov in Vienna; Ramzan Tsitsulayev, wanted by federal authorities for racketeering; and Shaa Turlayev, wanted by federal and international authorities for the assassination of the Yamadayev brothers, Umar Israilov, and Saigidpasha Umakhanov—have been overtly based in Chechnya under Kadyrov’s protection, without federal authorities even attempting to apprehend them. Interestingly, a group of *kadyrovtsy*, accused by the Moscow police of abducting a local businessman in 2011, subjecting him to severe torture and racketeering, were released upon Kadyrov’s intervention, even though Bastrykin was personally in-charge of the case. These numerous incidents over the recent decade are said to have antagonized the federal *siloviki*, who have come to see Putin’s protégé, Kadyrov, as an immense threat to the nation’s security.

Undoubtedly, it is Kadyrov’s special relationship with Putin—and the Russian president’s personal backing—that has granted the Chechen leader impunity against all odds. Its roots date back to the late 1990s, when Ramzan’s father and predecessor as Chechnya’s head, Akhmat Kadyrov, turned to Moscow in the early months of the renewed Russian invasion, handing over the city of Gudermes to the advancing federal troops. Akhmat Kadyrov’s side-switching has commonly been explained by his ideological frictions with Shamil Basayev and his Salafi-jihadist entourage. Yet, in fact, the Kadyrov family had been involved in a blood feud following the failed attempt to assassinate him by jihadists in 1998, with the *mufti*’s several bodyguards, all members of the Kadyrov family, dead. From then on, and in order to survive, the Kadyrovs were to unconditionally stick with Moscow, becoming fierce proponents of Russia’s counterinsurgency. This eventually led Putin to make a strategic wager on the Kadyrov family. This move has been since the mid-2010s widely criticized by scholars, politicians and observers in Russia and beyond, who have pointed to the “kadyrovisation” of the Chechen regime as the next, and essentially faulty, stage of Moscow’s relatively successful policy of Chechenization. According to this line of argument, due to these develop-

ments—as evidenced by Kadyrov’s recent ruthlessness—the Chechen leader has grown to become uncontrollable by Moscow, as he possesses substantial military, economic, and political resources. In a scenario in which Moscow sought to oust Kadyrov, then a new armed conflict may commence between Chechnya and federal authorities.

This opinion neglects a number of important factors. Since the late 2010s, the threat posed by Chechen jihadists has decreased considerably, not least owing to the massive deployment of violence by the *kadyrovtsy* against, *inter alia*, the insurgents’ relatives and supporters. However, the use of brute force against a wide spectrum of the Chechen populace initially supportive of the insurgents has earned Kadyrov and his troops thousands of avengers, who have postponed their retaliation for better times in order to save their relatives’ lives now. If the Russians cease to back Kadyrov, the Chechen leader and his family may turn into targets of retaliation. Kadyrov is certainly aware of this fact.

Consequently, in the hypothetical event of military confrontation between Grozny and Moscow, the *kadyrovtsy* may be not as loyal to the Chechen leader as one would assume, prioritizing their own personal survival and that of their family members over Kadyrov’s political agenda. Interestingly, following the liquidation of the Yamadayev brothers, their units, the *yamadayeivtsy*, were relatively easily incorporated into the *kadyrovtsy* in the late 2000s, after Kadyrov’s paramilitaries threatened to target the former’s relatives. It is likely that when facing a similar situation, the *kadyrovtsy*, a similarly organized and motivated force, would hardly be willing to risk their own and their relatives’ lives for the sake of their leader. In addition, given the scope of Kadyrov’s enemies within and outside Chechnya, Kadyrov may be assassinated by the Russian security services in the event of his disloyalty, with responsibility ascribed to the Chechen leader’s various enemies.

Even more so, the Chechen regime, heavily dependent on direct money transfers from Moscow, would barely survive a month without federal financial injections. As of now, the North Caucasian republic’s budget is largely made up of federal money; its share oscillates around 90 per cent of the total Chechnya’s budget. Moscow has gone the extra mile to ensure Grozny’s economic dependence on the federal center. For instance, despite the Chechen leader’s numerous attempts to change the situation, profits from the sale of Chechen oil are con-

trolled by Rosneft, a Russian state-owned oil company, with the Chechen authorities effectively excluded from this stable and significant source of money. Over the course of recent years, Kadyrov has built for himself a reputation as a caring father of a nation—this reputation has been contingent upon his personal ties with Putin, which has enabled him to acquire considerable financial resources for Chechnya’s reconstruction and relatively developed welfare provision.

However, as of yet, the Kremlin is not interested in ousting Kadyrov. First and foremost, Putin is notoriously grateful to those who have been personally loyal to him, closing his eyes to their occasional flaws. The Chechen leader has on many occasions proved his loyalty to Putin whom he, according to some local observers, has—after his father’s assassination in 2004—come to view and admire as his step-father. Kadyrov has largely crushed Chechnya’s once-formidable insurgency, which Putin—who owes his political career to the management of the violent conflict in the North Caucasuses—certainly appreciates. Besides, Kadyrov has developed into a villain of epic proportions, whom the Kremlin may at some point be eager to use. Within Russia, the Chechen armed units allocated to the *enfant terrible* of federal politics may be deployed as a sort of vigilant force against the prospectively vocal opposition movement, an all the more important task given the Russian authorities’ paranoid fear of “color revolutions” and the expected decline of the nation’s economy. Beyond Russia’s borders, too, the *kadyrovtsy* may serve a use, as evidenced by their deployment in both overrunning Crimea and in the fighting in eastern Ukraine. In both internal and external cases, the deployment of Kadyrov, a feared person with a feared military force, may help Moscow to distance itself from using controversial violence on the ground, while letting its proxy do the dirty job.

It is, thus, fairly safe to assume that, provided Kadyrov remains personally loyal to Putin and does not cross any red lines, the Russian president will not be interested in ousting him, tolerating his protégé’s occasional eccentricity. As of yet, in light of the current and prospective advantages of Kadyrov for these aims, Putin hardly has an incentive to dispose of the Chechen leader. An insignificant small incident with Stavropol policemen would surely not be regarded by the Russian president as such a red line.

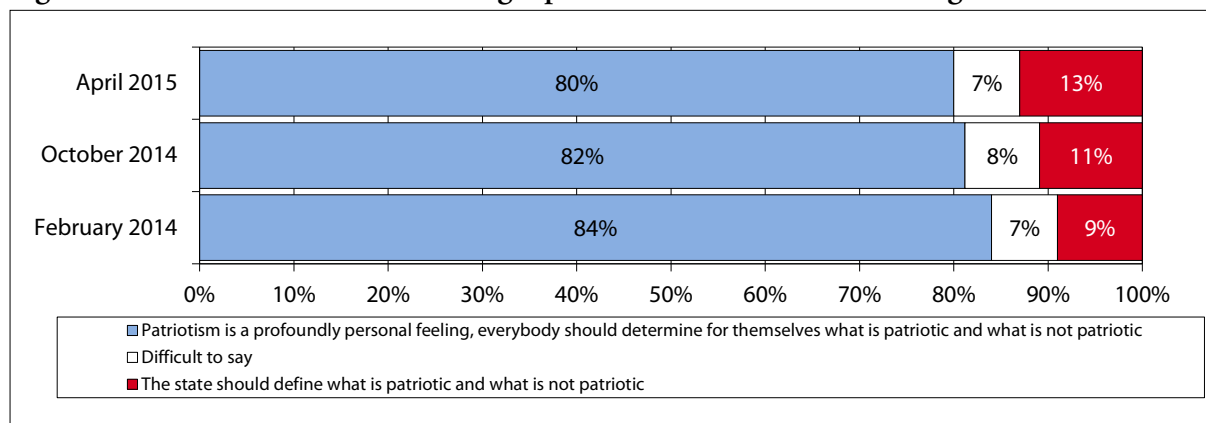
#### *About the Author*

Emil Aslan Souleimanov is Associate Professor of Russian and East European Studies at Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic. He has recently authored *The Individual Disengagement of Avengers, Nationalists, and Jihadists* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, with Huseyn Aliyev) and “Asymmetry of Values, Indigenous Forces, and Incumbent Success in Counterinsurgency: Evidence from Chechnya”, *Journal of Strategic Studies* (forthcoming in 2015, with Huseyn Aliyev).

## OPINION POLL

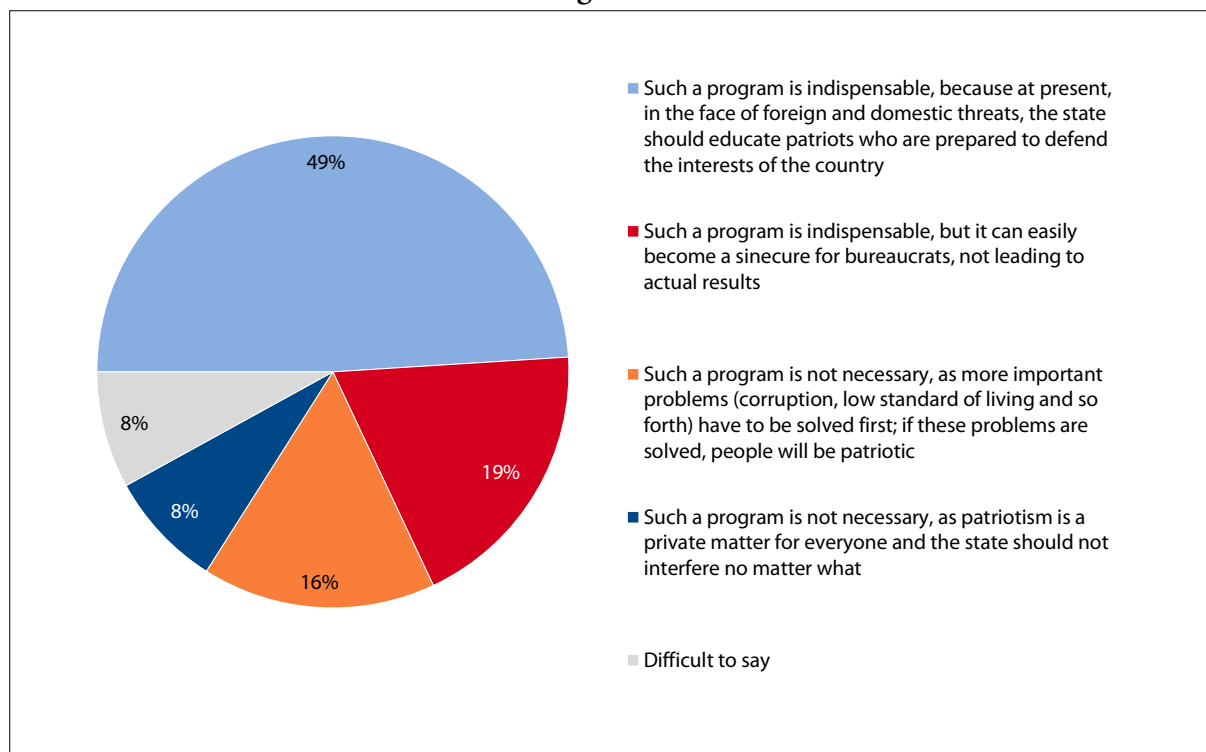
## Russian Attitudes towards Patriotism

Figure 1: With Which of the Following Opinions on Patriotism Do You Agree Most of All?



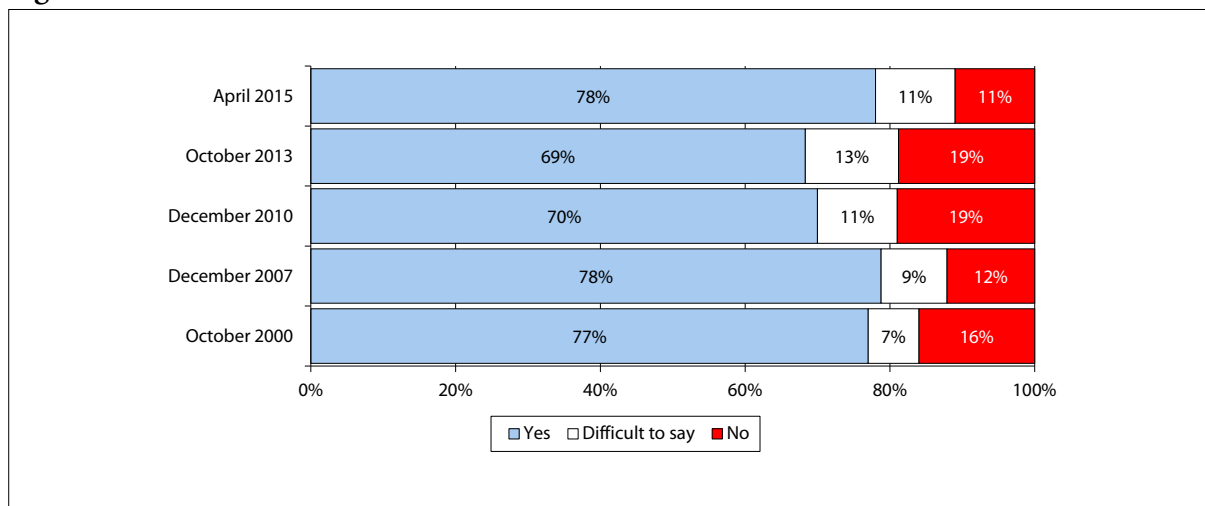
Source: representative opinion poll by Levada Center, 17–20 April 2015, N = 1600 <<http://www.levada.ru/print/29-04-2015/patriotizm-i-gosudarstvo>>, published on 1 May 2015

Figure 2: With Which of the Following Opinions on the State Program for the Patriotic Education of Russian Citizens Do You Agree Most of All?



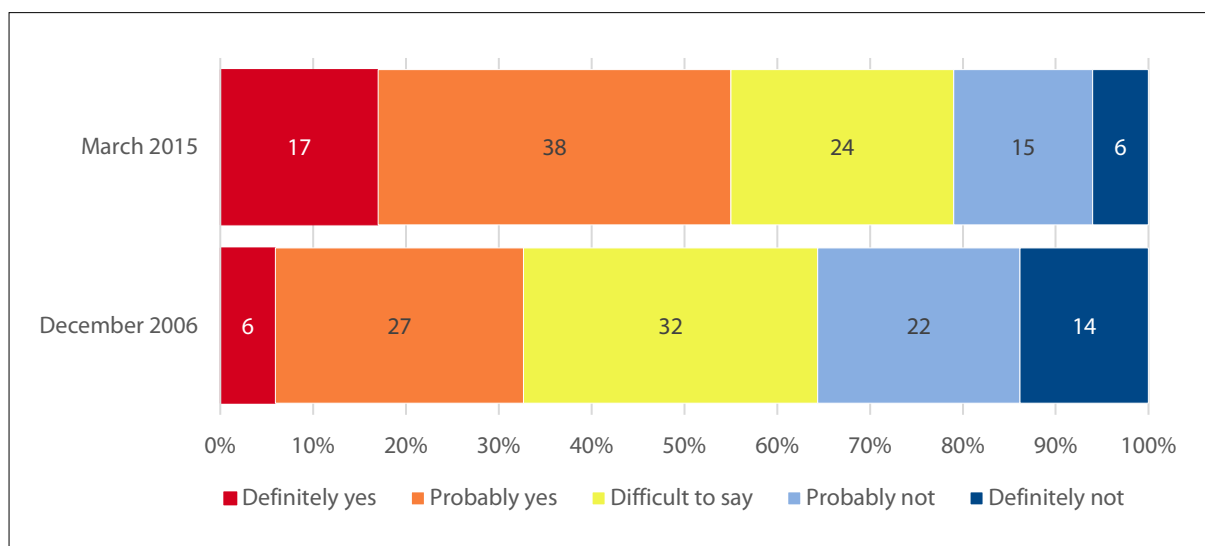
Source: representative opinion poll by Levada Center, 17–20 April 2015, N = 1600 <<http://www.levada.ru/print/29-04-2015/patriotizm-i-gosudarstvo>>, published on 1 May 2015



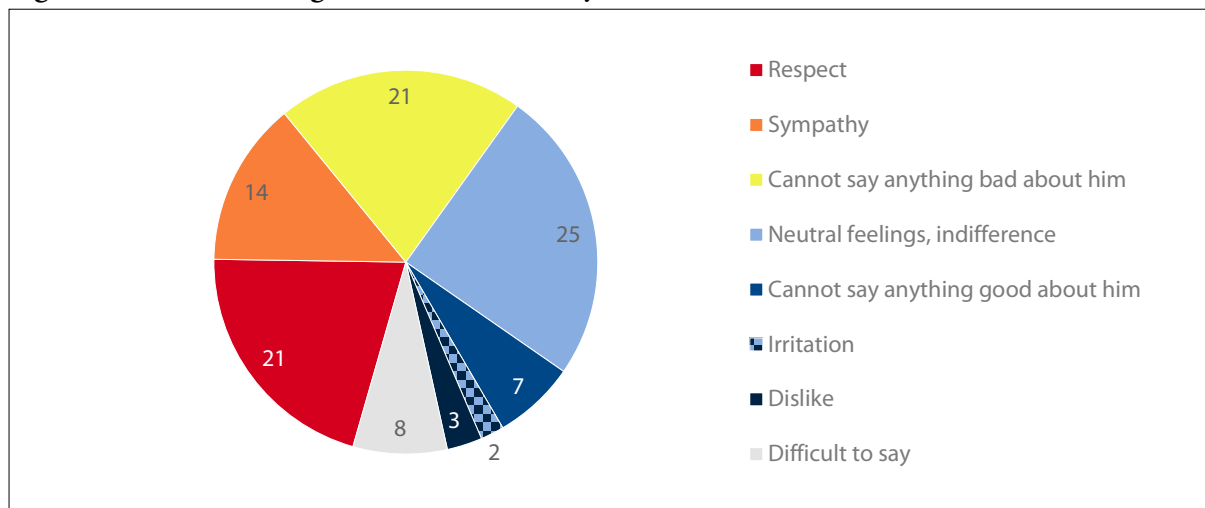
**Figure 3: Do You Consider Yourself a Russian Patriot?**

Source: representative opinion poll by Levada Center, 17–20 April 2015, N = 1600 <<http://www.levada.ru/print/29-04-2015/patriotizm-i-gosudarstvo>>, published on 1 May 2015

## “Can Ramzan Kadyrov Be Trusted?”

**Figure 1: What Do You Think, Can Ramzan Kadyrov Be Trusted? (in %)**

Source: representative opinion poll by Levada Center, 20–23 March 2015, N = 1600 <<http://www.levada.ru/31-03-2015/monitoring-vospriyatiya-naseleniem-situatsii-na-severnom-kavkaze>>, published on 31 March 2015

**Figure 2: Which Feelings Does Ramzan Kadyrov Evoke? (in %)**

Source: representative opinion poll by Levada Center, 23–26 January 2015,  $N = 1600$  <<http://www.levada.ru/31-03-2015/monitoring-vospriyatiya-naseleniem-situatsii-na-severnom-kavkaze>>, published on 31 March 2015

**Table 1: What Are the Consequences of the Work of Ramzan Kadyrov as President of Chechnya? (Several Answers Possible) (in %)**

	April 2007	April 2009	November 2011	January 2015	March 2015
The Kadyrov clan has established full control over Chechnya	27	26	30	38	35
Full pacification of and peaceful life in Chechnya	18	20	13	26	33
Growth of conflict between the Kadyrov clan and other Chechen clans	15	8	11	9	10
Growth of anti-Russian sentiment in Chechnya	7	2	6	3	3
Gradual isolation of Chechnya from Russia, loss of control over Chechnya by the federal center	11	11	10	3	3
Growth of chaos and disorder in Chechnya	6	5	5	4	3
Difficult to say	35	32	34	22	20

Source: representative opinion polls by Levada Center, April 2007 to 20–23 March 2015,  $N = 1600$  <<http://www.levada.ru/31-03-2015/monitoring-vospriyatiya-naseleniem-situatsii-na-severnom-kavkaze>>, published on 31 March 2015

## ABOUT THE RUSSIAN ANALYTICAL DIGEST

Editors: Stephen Aris, Matthias Neumann, Robert Ortung, Jeronim Perović, Heiko Pleines, Hans-Henning Schröder, Aglaya Snetkov

The Russian Analytical Digest is a bi-weekly internet publication jointly produced by the Research Centre for East European Studies [Forschungsstelle Osteuropa] at the University of Bremen (<[www.forschungsstelle.uni-bremen.de](http://www.forschungsstelle.uni-bremen.de)>), the Center for Security Studies (CSS) at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH Zurich), the Resource Security Institute, the Institute of History at the University of Zurich (<<http://www.hist.uzh.ch/>>), the Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies at The George Washington University, and the German Association for East European Studies (DGO). The Digest draws on contributions to the German-language Russland-Analysen (<[www.laenderanalysen.de/russland](http://www.laenderanalysen.de/russland)>), the CSS analytical network on Russia and Eurasia (<[www.css.ethz.ch/publications/RAD\\_EN](http://www.css.ethz.ch/publications/RAD_EN)>), and the Russian Regional Report. The Russian Analytical Digest covers political, economic, and social developments in Russia and its regions, and looks at Russia's role in international relations.

To subscribe or unsubscribe to the Russian Analytical Digest, please visit our web page at <[www.css.ethz.ch/publications/newsletter\\_RAD\\_EN](http://www.css.ethz.ch/publications/newsletter_RAD_EN)>

#### Research Centre for East European Studies at the University of Bremen

Founded in 1982, the Research Centre for East European Studies (Forschungsstelle Osteuropa) at the University of Bremen is dedicated to the interdisciplinary analysis of socialist and post-socialist developments in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The major focus is on the role of dissent, opposition and civil society in their historic, political, sociological and cultural dimensions.

With a unique archive on dissident culture under socialism and with an extensive collection of publications on Central and Eastern Europe, the Research Centre regularly hosts visiting scholars from all over the world.

One of the core missions of the institute is the dissemination of academic knowledge to the interested public. This includes regular e-mail newsletters covering current developments in Central and Eastern Europe.

#### The Center for Security Studies (CSS) at ETH Zurich

The Center for Security Studies (CSS) at ETH Zurich is a Swiss academic center of competence that specializes in research, teaching, and information services in the fields of international and Swiss security studies. The CSS also acts as a consultant to various political bodies and the general public. The CSS is engaged in research projects with a number of Swiss and international partners. The Center's research focus is on new risks, European and transatlantic security, strategy and doctrine, area studies, state failure and state building, and Swiss foreign and security policy.

In its teaching capacity, the CSS contributes to the ETH Zurich-based Bachelor of Arts (BA) in public policy degree course for prospective professional military officers in the Swiss army and the ETH and University of Zurich-based MA program in Comparative and International Studies (MACIS); offers and develops specialized courses and study programs to all ETH Zurich and University of Zurich students; and has the lead in the Executive Masters degree program in Security Policy and Crisis Management (MAS ETH SPCM), which is offered by ETH Zurich. The program is tailored to the needs of experienced senior executives and managers from the private and public sectors, the policy community, and the armed forces.

The CSS runs the International Relations and Security Network (ISN), and in cooperation with partner institutes manages the Crisis and Risk Network (CRN), the Parallel History Project on Cooperative Security (PHP), the Swiss Foreign and Security Policy Network (SSN), and the Russian and Eurasian Security (RES) Network.

#### The Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies, The Elliott School of International Affairs, The George Washington University

The Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies is home to a Master's program in European and Eurasian Studies, faculty members from political science, history, economics, sociology, anthropology, language and literature, and other fields, visiting scholars from around the world, research associates, graduate student fellows, and a rich assortment of brown bag lunches, seminars, public lectures, and conferences.

#### The Institute of History at the University of Zurich

The University of Zurich, founded in 1833, is one of the leading research universities in Europe and offers the widest range of study courses in Switzerland. With some 24,000 students and 1,900 graduates every year, Zurich is also Switzerland's largest university. Within the Faculty of Arts, the Institute of History consists of currently 17 professors and employs around a 100 researchers, teaching assistants and administrative staff. Research and teaching relate to the period from late antiquity to contemporary history. The Institute offers its 2,600 students a Bachelor's and Master's Degree in general history and various specialized subjects, including a comprehensive Master's Program in Eastern European History. Since 2009, the Institute also offers a structured PhD-program. For further information, visit at <<http://www.hist.uzh.ch/>>

#### Resource Security Institute

The Resource Security Institute (RSI) is a non-profit organization devoted to improving understanding about global energy security, particularly as it relates to Eurasia. We do this through collaborating on the publication of electronic newsletters, articles, books and public presentations.

Any opinions expressed in the Russian Analytical Digest are exclusively those of the authors.

Reprint possible with permission by the editors.

Editors: Stephen Aris, Matthias Neumann, Robert Ortung, Jeronim Perović, Heiko Pleines, Hans-Henning Schröder, Aglaya Snetkov

Layout: Cengiz Kibaroglu, Matthias Neumann, Michael Clemens

ISSN 1863-0421 © 2015 by Forschungsstelle Osteuropa, Bremen and Center for Security Studies, Zürich

Research Centre for East European Studies • Publications Department • Klagenfurter Str. 3 • 28359 Bremen • Germany

Phone: +49 421-218-69600 • Telefax: +49 421-218-69607 • e-mail: [fsopr@uni-bremen.de](mailto:fsopr@uni-bremen.de) • Internet: <[www.css.ethz.ch/publications/RAD\\_EN](http://www.css.ethz.ch/publications/RAD_EN)>